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LETTER DATED 16 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Please find herewith the statement by United States Senator,
Mr. Pat Roberts, member of the Senate Armed Forces and Intelligence Committees,
on the United States aggression against the Sudan (see annex).

Senator Roberts stated that the strike against the Al-Shifa factory was
based on faulty intelligence, and he said in the same statement that the strike
in regard to the Khartoum factory cannot be justified.

I should appreciate if you have the present letter and its annex circulated
as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Elfatih ERWA
Permanent Representative

Roberts calls U.S. missile attack on Sudan unjustified

[Latest News From Sudan At Sudan.Net]

News Article by WE on October 28, 1998 at 21:46:53.

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By Dennis Pearce
The Wichita Eagle

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts said Tuesday in Wichita that an American missile attack in August against a suspected terrorist installation in Sudan was not justified.

Speaking to 150 people who attended a luncheon sponsored by the Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce's issues focus forum, Roberts, R-Kan., suggested that the strike against a factory near Khartoum, Sudan, was based on faulty intelligence.

Sudan has said the factory made pharmaceuticals. The Clinton administration does not dispute that the factory might have had commercial purposes but insists that evidence found outside the plant proves it was also involved in making the building blocks of chemical weapons.

Although there have been assessments from both inside and outside the Clinton administration that the White House reached that conclusion too quickly, Roberts' statement takes the criticism of the decision to strike Sudan a step further.

Barry Toiv, a White House spokesman reached Tuesday night, defended President Clinton's decision to strike the plant with missiles.

*We are entirely confident that this attack was appropriate and justified based

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on solid intelligence evidence," Toiv said.

Toiv said he did not know why Roberts would think the decision to bomb the plant was unjustified. And he said he was not aware of any other senators making similar public allegations.

The strike, and a concurrent one against a suspected terrorism training complex in Afghanistan, was launched to retaliate against the bombings of U.S. embassies in East Africa two weeks before.

Roberts, a member of both the Senate Armed Forces and Intelligence committees, said during the speech Tuesday that he is worried about the role of American intelligence agencies.

"I think that you can make a pretty darned good case for the strike in Afghanistan," he said. "But the strike in regards to the Khartoum chemical plant cannot be justified.

"Those are pretty harsh words," he said. "I know one thing for sure. The other intelligence agencies of other countries look at that and they think, 'Wait a minute, if you hit the wrong target or if in fact the justification was not accurate, it is either ineptitude or, to get back to the wag-the-dog theory, something else is going on.'

"That gets to our credibility. And that is why both the administration and the Congress must insist on a foreign policy and a national security policy where if you draw a line in the sand, if you make a statement, your credibility is tremendously important."

The strikes were launched from U.S. ships in the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea under cover of darkness, with no U.S. casualties. With about 75 missiles timed to explode simultaneously in unsuspecting countries on two continents, the operation was the most formidable U.S. military assault ever against an alleged private sponsor of terrorism.

President Clinton and his national security team linked both sites to Osama bin Laden, the exiled Saudi millionaire tied by U.S. intelligence to the twin bombings Aug. 7 in Kenya and Tanzania. The bombings killed 12 Americans and nearly 300 Africans.

The U.S. strikes came after U.S. intelligence and law enforcement agencies had gathered what officials described as the strongest evidence ever obtained in a major terrorist case.

During his luncheon speech, originally billed as a report on the present and upcoming congressional sessions, Roberts, who served in the Marine Corps, said he believes there are "alarming trends in regards to our national security."

"We do not have adequate equipment to perform the mission we have to perform," he said. "This president, this Congress, has failed to provide the adequate funding we need for modernization."

Military readiness is being challenged, he said, because the government is not providing basic care for the men and women in the armed forces and they are leaving in ever-greater numbers, "leaving us with a close to being hollow force of uncertain effectiveness."

Even though the Cold War is over, these are still dangerous times, Roberts said, pointing to the growing threat of terrorists.

Deployments to Asia and Bosnia mean the Army has had to reduce base operating funds by 20 percent, Roberts said.

Air Force combat readiness has declined nearly 49 percent in the past 30 months, he said.

"And the carrier in the Gulf is only 60 percent manned. If Saddam Hussein starts trouble again, and he probably will, you try to conduct operations with 60 percent manning, we're going to lose some lives," Roberts said.

Another problem, he said, is that a smaller military is being asked to do more and more.

"In just this decade, we have deployed American military forces to more than 100 countries," he said. "As a matter of fact, this president has sent more men and women overseas than any other president, including in World War II."

The long times away from families in a military that has a marriage rate of 65

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percent has lowered morale in the armed services, Roberts said, causing more and more highly trained men and women to leave the service.

"If we are putting our military in a position of increased deployments and increased family separation, we must do a better job of providing adequate pay, health care and retirement benefits," Roberts said.

A soldier who drives a \$4 million, high-tech tank still has to obtain welfare and food stamps to support his wife and children, he said.

The drastic budget cuts have gone too far, Roberts said. The nation's security "begins and ends with people, and right now we are not treating our people fairly, and that's not right," he said.

"I think it is a national disgrace."
